

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-21 are amended and claim 22 is added, and, thus, the pending claims 1-22 remain for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested

No new matter has been added and accordingly, entry and approval of the amended claims 1-21 is respectfully requested.

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-22 are pending.

Claims 1-21 are rejected.

ITEMS 3-4: REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-2, 4, 9-10 AND 19-21 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) AS BEING ANTICIPATED BY AWAJI, JP 2000-148085 A, HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO "AWAJI."

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In accordance with the foregoing, independent claims 1 and 21, as currently amended, are intended to correspond to the claims discussed with the Examiner during interviews on December 14, 2006 and December 29, 2006.

Applicants respectfully submit that the independent claims patentably distinguish over the cited prior art for the reasons the Examiner agreed with during the interview.

Dependent claims patentably distinguish due at least to their dependence from the respective independent claims and/or because of reciting patentably distinguishing features of their own. Withdrawal of the rejections of the pending claims, and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

ITEMS 5-4: REJECTION OF CLAIMS 3, 5-8, 11-18 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Dependent claims 3, 5-8, 11-18 patentably distinguish due at least to their dependence from the independent claims and/or because of reciting patentably distinguishing features of their own. Withdrawal of the rejection of the pending claims, and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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